if so, to what extent and for how many passengers and crew it is considered fit for passenger flight and the progress made in that direction so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVILAVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) It will take about 2 1/2 to 3 years from now for the SARAS aircraft to obtain its Type Certificate from Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) and be ready for regular passenger flights.

The aircraft had its successful maiden test flight on 29th May, 2004 and the formal test flight took place on 22nd August 2004. In all 14 test successful flights have been conducted to establish basic flying qualities stability and control aspects, handling characteristics and system functionalities.

The prototypes are not outfitted to carry any passengers as they carry a substantial amount of flight test instruments. Passengers can be carried only after the aircraft obtains its certification. The production version of SARAS which will be available during 2007/2008 will have the capacity to carry 14 passengers and sufficient fuel to give a range of about 800 Kms.

Catering Services at Airport

13. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that middleclass people and other service personnel also use airports in India;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the Airports Authority of India has not encouraged any shops or catering places to be set up for people who cannot afford high prices eatables at our airports;

(c) the reasons for the Airport Authority of India not inviting the Coffee Board, the Tea Board and other such experienced organization to run some shops and catering places at our airport in the country; and

(d) what steps will be taken by Government to ensure that all categories of passengers are catered to by the AAI?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has encouraged shops and